

Beaches and Breaches: Articulations and Negotiations of Identity, Ethnicity and Cosmopolitanism in Mauritius – ‘The Most Cosmopolitan Island Under the Sun’

Reena Dobson

University of Western Sydney

Contextualised by its history of colonisation by France, then England, with a dominant part of the population whose ancestral home is in the Indian subcontinent while simultaneously belonging geographically to the continent of Africa, the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius can be seen as a “multicultural” island. As well as its success in containing its ethnic and cultural diversity, Mauritius has also had notable economic success – particularly in tourism. Mauritius has successfully marketed itself as a ‘paradise island’ tourist destination, making full use of the required geographical features of a tropical climate and unblemished sand-edged lagoons. Its successful multi-ethnicity has further allowed Mauritius to market itself in tourist brochures as ‘The Most Cosmopolitan Island under the Sun’. Because of its intense everyday multi-ethnicity, public spaces in Mauritius can cause frequent instances of liminality – where articulations of ethnicities, processes of tolerance, ideas of cosmopolitanism and negotiations of everyday life sway, shift and breach into places of uncertain and multi-layered ideas and identities. In this paper, I want to look at the case of Mauritius’ beaches – where hotel ‘tourist only’ beaches are juxtaposed with ungroomed local beaches, where ethnicised locals are juxtaposed against each other, whilst simultaneously juxtaposed against tourists. My focus will be on how Mauritius’ beaches become complex, liminal spaces where multiple layers of articulations and negotiations of identity and a sense of place – by locals and tourists alike – are breached, crossed, interlinked and un-linked, where identity, tolerance and cosmopolitanism are ebbing, weaving, swaying in constant processes of liminality.

Introduction

The Indian Ocean island of Mauritius is an interesting site of study. As an extremely multi-ethnic island, it has successfully contained its many ethnicities (without too many occasions of spilling over into ethnic violence, unlike many other multi-ethnic nation-states around the world). Mauritius has also successfully marketed itself as a “paradise island” tourist destination – particularly with its slogan Mauritius as ‘The Most Cosmopolitan Island under the Sun’, to the point that tourism is now one of Mauritius’ strongest exports. Further, it has also had successful enough economic progress to be considered one of the “African Tiger” economies, or, as Aumeerally puts it, to be considered an economic ‘Tiger in Paradise’.¹ Mauritius’ seemingly successful management of both, its pluri-ethnic society and its economy, has resulted in interest from a variety of scholars – locally from within Mauritius, as well as internationally.²

In this paper, I want to add to the existing scholarship by thinking through the Mauritius-based issues of everyday identity, multi-ethnicity, tourism and tolerance. In particular, I wish to apply a theoretical framework that makes use of ideas of cosmopolitanism, Victor Turner’s ideas on liminality, thresholds and *communitas*.

Mauritius: Past and Present

As an unsettled island (that is, without any indigenous population), Mauritius began its life as a colony. It was first claimed by the Dutch, who gave the island its name, but who were unable to create a lasting settlement. In 1715, the French claimed possession and successfully established a working infrastructure on the island. As with other European colonies, slave labour (and when slavery was abolished), indentured labour (from the Indian subcontinent) was heavily used.

Mauritius' strategic position in the Indian Ocean with regards to European trading routes meant that the British capture of the island in 1810 was an important one. However, the Franco-dominated society was topped up with nothing more than a veneer of English officialdom – with the result that, while Mauritius officially belonged to England, the lack of any significant British arrivals meant that the society remained a French-dominated.

From the time Mauritius gained its independence in 1968 until today, the population can thus be roughly divided into:

- Creoles (thirty percent of the population), brought to Mauritius from all over Africa, who can be further divided into cultural subgroups.
 - Franco-Mauritians (two percent of the population), descendants of the French colonisers, who have not stopped owning the bulk of the still-productive sugar industry.
 - Indo-Mauritians (sixty five percent of the population), descendants of the Indian indentured labourers (known as coolies) and also traders, who can and prefer, to be divided into; Hindus, Muslims, Tamils, Telegus and Marathis. Because of the numbers in which they were originally brought to Mauritius, this overall group is numerically dominant.
- Sino-Mauritians (three percent of the population), descendants of Chinese merchants who migrated to Mauritius in the early 1900s.

The broad ethnic groups into which nearly all Mauritians could claim some form of ethnic membership, and into which all Mauritians have some form of ethnic membership, whether they choose to admit it or not. There are further divisions – with religion, caste, class, and an urban/rural (education) divide creating further intersections. But ethnicity remains the most dominant basis of identification.

Daily Ethnicised Identities in Mauritius

Given the notion that identities are multiple, changeable and contradictory,³ Eriksen explains ethnicity as being 'a property of a relationship between two or several groups, not a property of a group; it exists *between* and not *within* groups' (author's emphasis).⁴ Fenton further states that, 'for ethnicity to spring to life it is necessary that *real or perceived differences of ancestry, culture and language are mobilised in social transactions*' (author's emphasis).⁵ Within these conceptualisations then, ethnicity arises out of juxtapositions between groups, which actively construct/reinforce themselves as distinct.

There are several frequently-utilised juxtapositions via which ethnic identities are continuously (re-)constructed and mobilised. In providing the above dot-point breakdown of Mauritius' pluri-ethnic population, I have reproduced one such juxtaposition. Imagined links to geographically distinct ancestral spaces (Africa for the Creoles, France for the Franco-Mauritians, India/Pakistan for the Indo-Mauritians and Hong-Kong/China for the Sino-Mauritians) are one such way of reinforcing ethnic difference. Further, everyday performances of the self – names – first names and surnames – clothing, jewellery, phenotypes features (that is, physical appearance),⁶ as well as religion and religious practices, are all used in tactical, varying combinations to mark, signify and maintain ethnic difference.

This ethnic arsenal is then provided further ammunition via a ready catalogue of positive and negative stereotypes of self and other – so that each group can construct itself positively and equally construct others negatively. In short, Hindus see themselves as hardworking, but are seen by other

groups as being nepotistic/domineering. Muslims see themselves as hardworking members of a proud religion, but can be seen by others as fanatical. Creoles see themselves as laidback, while others see them as lazy. Sino-Mauritians see themselves as careful/prudent but are seen by others as being closed/selfish. Franco-Mauritians see themselves as cultured, but are seen by others as arrogant.⁷ In addition to this popular catalogue, as further currency for insertion between ethnic groups, just about every ethnic group has a Kreol “nickname”: Madras Calain, Hindou Malbar, Musilman Marron, Creole Mazambique, Sinnwa Macao, Anglais/Francais Potisse. The terms “Malbar”, “Mazambique” and “Macao” especially, are significant because they (in particular) cite the space of origin of the ethnic group. However, all these “nicknames”, or ethnic labels, are in frequent daily usage in Mauritius, and can be articulated jokingly amongst friends, or in a deliberately derogatory, othering context. The daily presentations of individual ethnic identities are thus juxtaposed and made visible daily, alongside the interpretation, deduction, negotiation and categorisation of other ethnic identities.

However, one of the constant paradoxes of daily ethnicised life in Mauritius is that ethnic identities are focussed upon, articulated, interpreted, negotiated and tolerated, but this ethnic focus is rarely overtly acknowledged – particularly in the public sphere. This tactic of subsuming the ethnic focus – in the public arena at least – is successfully maintained due to the daily *lingua franca* of Kreol. Kreol is the daily spoken vernacular that is used by most Mauritians in daily situations – within the family home as well as in public spaces, in daily informal situations, as well as in some formal situations. In other more formal situations, the ex-colonial languages of French and English are employed, while all remaining ethno-religious languages are used for mainly religious/ritualised purposes.⁸ As such, Kreol is the daily, ethnically-neutral means of communication that allows the daily successful crossing between different ethnic groups, and in doing so, its use aids in the masking of the constantly reinforced ethnic identities – particularly in public spaces. Kreol allows the means of both articulating one’s ethnic identity as well as negotiating other ethnic identities in the daily spaces of everyday life.

Mauritius as ‘The Most Cosmopolitan Island under the Sun’

‘The Most Cosmopolitan Island under the Sun’ is a phrase that highlights another layer of complexity in quotidian life in Mauritius. Wrapped up into this slogan are several ideas that are worth “unpacking”. First of all, this phrase – and variations thereof – appears in mostly overseas-produced advertising brochures, including during a brief period in the early 1990s, on Australian television. The phrase is aimed therefore at an overseas – i.e., non-Mauritian audience – of potential tourists to Mauritius. The image being projected is clearly one of not only paradise island “sun, sand and sea” – as encapsulated in words ‘island under the sun’, but also that Mauritius is ‘the most Cosmopolitan’ island. Mauritius’ pluri-ethnic population and its mostly peaceful history, therefore, is part of its packaging and appeal to an international audience. Mauritians are aware of the importance of their tourist economy, and while there is not any deliberate awareness of Mauritius as being, or needing to be, cosmopolitan, there are instead popular images of cosmopolitanism available for tourist consumption, around which has settled, for Mauritians, a more ambiguous idea of interacting within the idea of a cosmopolitan image.

Mauritius’ beaches, made up of white sand and warm lagoons, make up the literal, physical borders of the island, (as well as also constituting open, porous, ambiguous borders). As public spaces, Mauritius’ beaches also have an additional element when looking at them as spaces of liminality. Because, in addition to the articulations/negotiations/rejections of ethnicities between Mauritians that take place in public (liminal) spaces, the beaches also then bring in tourists – temporary visitors to Mauritius, who remain outside of the ethnicised daily life and focus, but who, by their presence (or by local knowledge/awareness of their possible presence), add an extra element/dimension (of tourism, or cosmopolitanism) to the liminal spaces that develop on the beaches. The following brief case studies illustrate the additional layers of complexity impacting on daily ethnicised interactions.

Case Study: La Pirogue

La Pirogue is a long standing hotel beach on Mauritius' west coast; as with most other hotels and hotel beaches, the hotel grounds and the associated beach are considered to be the exclusive domain of the hotel and tourists. Whilst not legally enforceable, locals nevertheless consider the hotel beaches to be 'off limits', particularly for picnicking or swimming in and only hawkers and local workers venture through regularly. And sneaking in is possible if one fits the image of a 'typical' (i.e. white-skinned) tourist enough to not arouse suspicion of staff and security guards. La Pirogue is a picture perfect image of what a tourist paradise island looks like, with lush lawns underfoot, palm trees everywhere and amenities galore (if sea, sun and sand isn't enough). Interactions on the La Pirogue grounds between locals and tourists are limited to greetings of '*bonjour*' with local workers or hawkers, whose main interests are in garnering tourist attention to wares for sale (sarongs, shell jewellery, 'exotically' presented fruit etc) or hotel activities (deep sea fishing, snorkelling, glass bottom boats, skiing, jet-skiing, wind-surfing, parasailing etc) respectively. La Pirogue is a bubble that is distinctly removed from everyday life; it provides an image of life in Mauritius as a bleached, unbreached picture perfect postcard. Locals and tourists interact mainly in clearly defined broad roles, of locals (workers) and tourists (at leisure).

Case Study: Flic en Flac

Flic en Flac is the local beach 'next door' to La Pirogue (a sense of separateness is visible through a juxtaposition of ungroomed vs. groomed beaches). La Pirogue's stereotyped tropical-imagined palm trees give way to the more ubiquitous casuarinas (filao) trees. Rather than lush lawns, Flic en Flac has carpets that require careful walking – over casuarinas leaves and spiky seeds, sooty sand (from camp fires), cigarette butts, other rubbish and around nervous stray dogs. The lagoons, however, are as blue, as warm and as inviting as La Pirogue's. And Flic en Flac is packed during the weekends with families, enjoying the rituals of picnics, playing in the sand, playing football or volleyball, splashing and swimming and going for walks.

Performances of ethnicity, so prevalent and inescapable in daily life, are somewhat in abeyance at the beaches. Ethnicised clothing is mostly replaced with western-style beach wear (complete with brand names), and preferred picnic foods are surprisingly similar, as are choices of vendor-purchased treats, and of course, most conversation is carried out in Kreol. However, interactions are very much restricted to within family groups. As the local saying goes, on the weekends, Flic en Flac hosts 'one family under every Filao tree', and the tree space is carefully guarded. Through phenotyped features in particular, ethnic identities are clearly discernable, they do not hold quite the same sway/dominance as in other public spaces in general everyday life.

Tourists who venture into Flic en Flac during the week are usually pressed with offers of taxi services, glass-bottomed boat rides, fish and the more usual sarongs and necklaces. For the braver tourists who care to breach local spaces on the weekends and run the gamut of the local gazes, venturing beyond La Pirogue into Flic en Flac literally provides images of 'the most cosmopolitan island under the sun' (except for the not very photogenic beach), in the form of picnicking locals. Similarly, locals who venture for a walk towards/through La Pirogue will do so usually right at the water's edge, as far away from the hotel itself as it is possible to be, while still being on the 'hotel beach'.

Case Study: Ile Aux Cerfs

In contrast to the La Pirogue/ Flic en Flac case study, Ile Aux Cerfs is a one-of-a-kind space in Mauritius. It is literally a deserted island, just off the east coast of Mauritius, with beaches which routinely fit into the "paradise island" mould. Other than the carved out designer golf course in the interior and the restaurant and odd *pailots* and beach equipment hire, the island is otherwise

untouched by development (no hotels, no bungalows, and no-one is allowed to stay there overnight). Although it is owned by one of the hotels, it is kept uninhabited. It is a drawcard for locals and tourists alike, who share the *pirogue* (wooden boat) ferries to and from the island, as well as sharing the beaches themselves.

And as a result, walking along the coastline of the island on any given day, the beaches give the impression of being literally, physically, visually and bodily cosmopolitan. A little closer observation however, revealed interactions that are characterised by a gamut of reactions – from awkwardness, self-consciousness and covert gazes – to tolerance, dismissal and welcomes. On the occasions I visited the island, it was interesting to note the definite special divisions which were set up – particularly between locals and tourists – whereby tourists mostly settled on the one stretch of beach, while locals clustered mostly along a neighbouring stretch of beach, replicating the La Pirogue/Flic en Flac juxtaposition. Examples of interactions which took place on/around Ile Aux Cerfs are epitomised in the following:

Firstly, on several occasions, particularly in the pirogue ferries on the way to and from the island, tourists would initiate brief conversations with each other, experimentally working their way through different European languages in an effort to find a common one. Invariably, the common languages turned out to be French or English, which had the effect of not-excluding the locals on the pirogue.

Secondly, I spoke to some Mauritian youths as part of my fieldwork, who acknowledged the role played by the beach – particularly Ile Aux Cerfs – in providing a surveillance-free public space where time and fun could be spent with friends/lovers (usually of a different ethnicity) not approved of/not known about/not accepted by family members. In these cases, part of the appeal of Ile Aux Cerfs for these local youths is its dual status as a tourist destination. The international ambiance created by the presence of varied tourists creates a neutral, non-ethnicised, cosmopolitan public space for these local youths, who can then symbolically and physically defy and reject the ethnicised requirements and demands of everyday Mauritius life, for at least a few hours.

A third, and final example, was of a male tourist with a camera around his neck, who, wading around a bend, came upon a clearly “local” (as designated mainly by skin colour, clothing) family resting under the Filao trees, comfortably out of the sun, not too far from him at the water’s edge. Even though he was accompanied by a local “guide”, the tourist chose not to confer with the guide and still standing in the water, he raised his camera and snapped a hasty picture (not too much time spent on composition or focussing) that would clearly be framed as a “local Mauritian family at the beach” snapshot. The tourist was wearing sunglasses, and immediately after his shot, his lips half-quirked into a semblance of a half-smile that seemed to also be half-uncertain and semi-apologetic. That was all the reaction he gave and that was all the communication that passed between the locals and the tourist, as the tourist quickly ducked his head and went on his way. The locals paid no heed to the tourist, his camera and his snapshot. Not necessarily because they were used to being local subjects of the tourist gaze, but because that was what tourists did. I have since wondered how the tourist’s subsequent snapshot would be contextualised “back home”: as a tourist venturing amongst locals? As a typical Mauritius beach scene? As a cosmopolitan image?

Public Space as Liminal Space in Mauritius

Public spaces generally – of which Mauritius beaches are an illustrative case-in-point – are liminal spaces. Public spaces become constant border zones for ethnicised individuals. In public spaces, ethnic identities are an element that gets articulated, recognised and negotiated in the face of other ethnic identities. So my argument is that daily life – particularly in everyday public spaces – where articulations and performances of ethnic identities, and processes of negotiations of, and tolerance/understanding towards, other groups/ethnicities, “lubricated” and facilitated by the use of Kreol, all take place/operate constantly and in multiple ways, take place in spaces of liminality.

This idea of a liminal space that I am proposing, is well removed from that of Victor Turner. In the words of Langman and Cangemi, Turner’s approach argued for a ‘bifurcation of reality into the

normative structure and a liminal anti-structure [with] a space of transformation between phases of separation and reincorporation'.⁹ Heavily situated within an organised, ritualised "rite of passage", Turner's notion of liminality 'is associated with a transgressive middle stage of a rite, the threshold, margin or point at which activities and conditions are most uncertain, and in which the normative structure of society is temporarily overturned',¹⁰ becoming suspended or inverted.¹¹ The person undergoing the rite of passage crosses the threshold to enter a space without status and 'betwixt and between', before re-emerging at the other end as a new, "unambiguous" self with a clearly defined social status.

However, closer to my adaptation of liminality, is the liminal in the same vein as the notion of a border – less defined, less ritualised and more fluid. Howitt describes it as a 'multi-dimensional, real-world idea of edges as places with a more solid and changeable engagement with complexity'.¹² Donald Weber describes the notion of the border (and claiming the border) as a:

... political space conferring an enabling doubleness (or tripleness etc), [that] is radically different from Turner's ritual liminars, seeking transcendent communitas and a new 'unambiguous' self. ...[T]he border, porous and open, emerges as a zone capable of nourishing a rich grid of 'crisscrossed', multiple identities, a celebration of ambiguity...¹³

So, this idea then, of the border as porous and open and able to sustain multiple identities, as well as celebrate ambiguity, is a useful way of conceptualising, of reflecting on my argument of public spaces in Mauritius as border zones for ethnicised individuals, as spaces for articulating, negotiating, performing, critiquing or rejecting ethnicity, of public spaces as spaces of some neutrality from otherwise dominant ethnicised mindsets.

However, while the concept of the porous border is useful, the concept of liminality, once freed from the structure (or anti-structure) of the "rite of passage", is made much more translatable. It is easier to conceptualise of Mauritius' public spaces as liminal – allowing a sense of the differing processes around ethnicity (articulation, negotiation, tolerance, rejection etc) – also, especially, because of the temporality or ephemerality associated with liminality. The public spaces become liminal only for as long as there is an ethnicised interaction of some sort, whereas borders and border zones give an impression of being solid and real – distinctly and physically marked out. Liminal spaces develop, expand and diminish around the interethnic interactions. A concept of liminality therefore, allows an understanding of the ebb, sway and flow of daily interactions, at specific moments, between ethnicised individuals and/or groups.

The Liminal, The Threshold, Communitas and "Cosmopolitas"

The beachscape case studies of La Pirogue, Flic en Flac and Ile Aux Cerfs are illustrative of the liminality of public spaces generally and beach spaces in particular, with the range of interactions varying from interethnic to local-tourist to tourist-tourist interactions. Many of the interactions that take place on these beaches are in some way characterised by a sense of stiltedness, mundane-ness or awkwardness, rather than being of the deeply moving or insightful kind. I would argue however, it is the very mundane-ness or awkwardness of the interactions which illustrates the liminal context within which they are taking place – whether they are taking place between ethnic self and ethnic other, or between local self and tourist other. The sense of the liminal quality of the interaction is heightened and made more visible, particularly when performances/presentations of ethnicity intersect with those of skin colour, other countries/continents, class and cultural capital.

The other point about the concept of liminality is that, central to it, is the idea of the threshold. Taken from *limen*, the Latin for threshold, the very concept of the liminal is built around it being in-between, indeterminate, a short-lasting stage – a threshold that can either be crossed or not crossed. And significantly, in Mauritius, many interethnic interactions taking place in liminal spaces, do not have any crossing of thresholds. There is merely a retreat (however reluctant or matter of fact) back to a tourist or local identity, and further, to the ethnic concentric circles and a dominant ethnic identity. Liminal spaces that develop on the beach then, can contain a more overt threshold based on interactions. These interactions can be negotiations, articulations, gazing, critiquing and rejecting.

As a result, there is a far more overt sense of self and other to be returned to in the aftermath of the liminal space.

Further however, within Turner's notion of liminality, is a crossing of the threshold in what he called 'communitas'. Rubenstein describes it as:

Communitas strives for release from daily obligations and requirements, and seeks universalism and openness. Where *societas* functions to define the differences between individuals, limit their interaction, and pull them apart, *communitas* serves to unify, bond, and transcend structural relationships. By doing so, *communitas* reminds society that at a deeper level all of its members are human and equal, despite the accepted social and hierarchical differences.¹⁴

At first glance, it does not appear that either daily ethnicised interactions in public spaces, or local-tourist interactions on beaches, can be considered to be any kind of 'communitas', particularly, given the ephemeral quality to the liminality I am arguing for. However, I would argue that, it is the fact that interethnic and local-tourist interactions can take place at all – which they do in liminal public spaces – which produces a sense of *communitas*. Central to Turner's concept of *communitas* is a sense of some overarching feeling/sentiment of humanity. In addition to Rubenstein's conceptualisation, Letkemann explains it as 'a sense of common purpose and communion, similar to the collective human bond that is the thematic ... basis of the ideal notion of "community"'.¹⁵ Rather than seeing the underlying/overarching sense of humanity/community as absent, following Bilu's argument, I am arguing that *communitas* can frequently be marked by, 'expression[s] of divergent, sometimes contrasting sentiments'.¹⁶

More particularly, it is not a sense of humanity, or community, but a sense of (drawing out of everyday life in Mauritius) cosmopolitanism, a sense of everyday pluri-ethnicity, a sense of everyday multiculturalism. Imbued within the daily processes of interactions in daily, public, liminal spaces, is a recognition of 'everyday cosmopolitanism',¹⁷ operating in Mauritius. Just as Benedict Anderson argued that the nation is an imagined community, imagined into being by people with the knowledge of being bound by shared rituals,¹⁸ so Mauritians operate in their daily lives, within the knowledges that they are bound within an island space, that there are not only multiple ethnic groups whose boundaries are being constantly reified, but also a constant stream of transient tourists – whose place in the island economy is continuously important. As such, interactions with other ethnicised individuals are inevitable, while interactions with tourists can take place. These knowledges and imaginings help to construct ongoing liminal spaces for public interactions.

A better term with which to more accurately portray the sense of *communitas* away from the "human" bond, is a sense of what I am calling, "cosmopolitas". "Cosmopolitas" adapts the concept of *communitas*, and rather than operating on the theme of community and equality, works instead on an idea of cosmopolitanism. Using the broad understanding of cosmopolitanism as being about, 'mobilities of ideas, objects and images just as much as it is about mobilities of people [so that] [c]osmopolitanism is not only embodied, but also felt, imagined, consumed, fantasised'.¹⁹ Situated within this broad understanding of cosmopolitanism then, my idea of a "cosmopolitas" reflect the mundane everyday nature of the liminality that I have argued for. It also encapsulates the multiple recognition of Mauritius by Mauritians as a cosmopolitan space within the gaze of the tourist market, and also because of the tourist market, as well as in the face of a pluri-ethnic daily existence. Further, a space of "cosmopolitas" easily allows for and incorporates all the contradictions and negative emotions of daily, cosmopolitan life that takes place in liminal spaces. Thus, the irritations, shyness, aloofness, guilt, self-consciousness, awkwardness and wariness that can characterise daily interethnic, as well as local-tourist interactions, are an expected, acceptable, almost necessary part of a sense of "cosmopolitas". "Cosmopolitas" accentuates an awareness and an expectation of the intensely daily and un-spectacular interactions that allow the threshold to not be crossed through in liminal settings and still necessarily continue to operate.

Conclusion

While Turner's original argument of liminality is that it takes place during a specific ritual, I have argued that, in such an intensely pluri-ethnic, cosmopolitan society as Mauritius, where every individual lives an ethnicised daily life, in public life, there are thresholds of non-ethnicised neutrality being reached/confronted on a daily basis, and not necessarily in a ritualised way. For this paper, various beaches and events have been presented as case studies of how public spaces more generally, can be understood as liminal spaces loaded/imbued with politics/performances/articulations/negotiations of identity/ethnicity/cosmopolitanism. Such constant liminality functions via a sense/an awareness of cosmopolitas – which encompasses mundane interactions in all their positivity and negativity, to allow an ongoing threshold to operate.

Notes

¹ N.L. Aumeerally, "'Tiger in Paradise": Reading Global Mauritius in Shifting Time and Space', *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2005, p.161.

² See for example, N.L. Aumeerally, 'The Ambivalence of Postcolonial Mauritius. Policy versus Practice in Education: A Reading of Official and Popular Multiculturalism', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 11, no. 3, 2005, pp.307-323; N.L. Aumeerally, "'Tiger in Paradise": Reading Global Mauritius in Shifting Time and Space', *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2005, pp.161-180; L.W. Bowman, *Mauritius. Democracy and Development in the Indian Ocean*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1991; B.W. Carroll & T. Carroll, 'The Consolidation of Democracy in Mauritius', *Democratization*, vol.6, no.1, 1999, pp.179-197; B.W. Carroll and T. Carroll, 'Enhancing Policy Capacity in Botswana and Mauritius', *Public Sector Management*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2001, pp.25-27; P. Eisenlohr, 'The Politics of Diaspora and the Morality of Secularism: Muslim Identities and Islamic Authority in Mauritius', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 12, 2006, pp.395-412; P. Eisenlohr, 'Register Levels of Ethno-National Purity: The Ethnicization of Language of Community in Mauritius', *Language Society*, vol. 33, 2004, pp.59-80; T.H. Eriksen, 'Ethnicity versus Nationalism', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 28, no. 3, 1991, pp.263-278; T.H. Eriksen, 'Nationalism, Mauritian Style: Cultural Unity and Ethnic Diversity', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 36, 1994, pp.549-574; T.H. Eriksen, *Common Denominators: Ethnicity, Nation-Building and Compromise in Mauritius*, Berg, London, 1998; T.H. Eriksen, 'Ethnic Identity, National Identity and Intergroup Conflict: The Significance of Personal Experiences', in D. Ashmore, L. Jussim & D. Wilder (eds), *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict and Conflict Reduction*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, pp.42-70; R. Laville, 'In the Politics of the Rainbow: Creoles and Civil Society in Mauritius', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, vol. 8, 2000, pp.277-294.

³ G. Noble, S. Poynting and P. Tabar, 'Youth, Ethnicity and the Mapping of Identities: Strategic Essentialism and Strategic Hybridity among Male Arabic-Speaking Youth in South-Western Sydney', *Communal/Plural*, vol.7, no.1, 1999, pp.29.

⁴ Eriksen, 'Ethnic Identity, National Identity and Intergroup Conflict', p.46.

⁵ S. Fenton, *Ethnicity: Racism, Class, and Culture*, Macmillan, Houndsmills, 1999, p.6.

⁶ Eriksen, *Common Denominators*.

⁷ *ibid*.

⁸ See Eisenlohr, 'Register Levels of Ethno-National Purity'.

⁹ L. Langman, and K. Cangemi, 'Globalization and the Liminal: Transgression, Identity and the Urban Primitive', *Research in Urban Policy*, vol. 9, 2003, pp.141-176.

¹⁰ K. Hetherington, 'Identity Formation, Space and Social Centrality', *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol. 13, no. 4, 1996, p.36.

¹¹ P.G. Letkemann, 'The Office Workplace: Communitas and Hierarchical Social Structures', *Anthropologica*, vol. XLIV, 2002, p.258.

¹² R. Howitt, 'Frontiers, Borders, Edges: Liminal Challenges to the Hegemony of Exclusion', *Australian Geographical Studies*, vol. 39, no. 2, 2001, p.234.

¹³ D. Weber, 'From Limen to Border: A Meditation on the Legacy of Victor Turner for American Cultural Studies', *American Quarterly*, vol. 47, no. 3, 1995, p.532.

¹⁴ J. Rubenstein, 'Purim, Liminality and Communitas', *AJS Review*, vol. 17, no. 2, 1992, pp.247-277.

¹⁵ Letkemann, 'The Office Workplace', p.257.

¹⁶ Y. Bilu, 'The Inner Limits of Communitas: A Covert Dimension of Pilgrimage Experience', *Ethos*, vol.16, no.3, 1988, p.306.

¹⁷ See G. Noble, 'Everyday cosmopolitanism, Community and Relations', presented at Sites of Cosmopolitanism: Aesthetics, Citizenship, Community, Griffith University, Brisbane, 6-8 July 2005.

¹⁸ See B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Rev. Ed., Verso, London, 1991.

¹⁹ Z. Skrbis, G. Kendall and I. Woodward, 'Location Cosmopolitanism: Between Humanist Ideal and Grounded Social Category', *Theory, Culture and Society*, vol. 21, no. 6, 2004, p.121.